

LESSON PLANNING PRACTICES OF ALBANIAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION IN KOSOVO

PRÁTICAS DE PLANEJAMENTO DE AULAS DE PROFESSORES DE LÍNGUA ALBANESA NO ENSINO MÉDIO INICIAL NO KOSOVO

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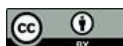
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Abstract

Lesson planning represents a fundamental component of the educational process, through which the teacher defines objectives, learning outcomes, and the activities carried out during the lesson. The purpose of this study is to analyze lesson planning practices and their content in relation to curriculum requirements, as well as to identify the challenges faced by Albanian language teachers in lower secondary schools in Kosovo. The study was conducted in 15 lower secondary schools in the Pristina Region, selected randomly, involving 30 Albanian language teachers. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and the analysis of lesson plans prepared by the teachers. The research findings indicate significant difficulties in fulfilling key components of the planning model, such as: formulating learning outcomes, defining success criteria, integrating cross-curricular links, planning assessment, and reflecting on the teaching process. These challenges are evident both in the analysis of lesson plans and in teachers' perceptions. As a result, there is a tendency to use or reuse ready-made lesson plans, often not aligned with curriculum standards. To improve lesson planning practices, continuous professional support for teachers is recommended, including training and other forms of development. It is also suggested to review existing planning models and develop more flexible formats that are better oriented toward pedagogical content. The findings of this study may contribute to improving the quality of teaching and the more effective implementation of the curriculum in lower secondary education in Kosovo.

Resumo

O planejamento de aulas representa um componente fundamental do processo educacional, por meio do qual o professor define objetivos, resultados de aprendizagem e as atividades realizadas durante a aula. O objetivo deste estudo é analisar as práticas de planejamento de aulas e seu conteúdo em relação aos requisitos curriculares, bem como identificar os desafios enfrentados pelos professores de língua albanesa nas escolas do ensino fundamental II no Kosovo. O estudo foi realizado em 15 escolas do ensino fundamental II na região de Pristina, selecionadas aleatoriamente, envolvendo 30 professores de língua albanesa. Os dados foram coletados por meio de um questionário estruturado e da análise dos planos de aula elaborados pelos professores. Os resultados da pesquisa indicam dificuldades significativas no cumprimento de componentes-chave do modelo de planejamento, tais como: formulação de resultados de aprendizagem, definição de critérios de sucesso, integração de vínculos interdisciplinares, planejamento da avaliação e reflexão sobre o processo de ensino. Esses desafios são evidentes tanto na análise dos planos de aula quanto nas percepções dos professores. Como resultado, há uma tendência de usar ou reutilizar planos de aula prontos, muitas vezes não alinhados com os padrões curriculares. Para melhorar as práticas de planejamento de aulas, recomenda-se o apoio profissional contínuo aos professores, incluindo treinamento e outras formas de desenvolvimento. Sugere-se também a revisão dos modelos de planejamento existentes e o desenvolvimento de formatos mais flexíveis, mais orientados para o conteúdo pedagógico. Os resultados deste estudo podem contribuir



Keywords: Lesson Planning. Teaching Practices. Curriculum Requirements. Teacher Challenges. Lower Secondary Education.

para melhorar a qualidade do ensino e para uma implementação mais eficaz do currículo no ensino fundamental II no Kosovo.

Palavras-chave: Planejamento de Aulas. Práticas de Ensino. Requisitos Curriculares. Desafios dos Professores. Ensino Fundamental II.

1 INTRODUCTION

Lesson planning represents a fundamental component in ensuring the quality of teaching and the effective implementation of the curriculum. Within the framework of reforms in pre-university education in Kosovo, which have introduced a competency-based curriculum, the role of lesson planning has significantly intensified. This approach requires Albanian language teachers to design structured and functional lesson plans that integrate learning outcomes, success criteria, assessment strategies, learning activities, and professional reflection aimed at improving teaching practice.

However, existing literature indicates that teachers face considerable challenges in fully implementing lesson planning requirements (Potera & Shala, 2018; Mehmeti *et al.*, 2019). These challenges are mainly related to an incomplete understanding of the new curriculum, the administrative complexity of planning templates, and the lack of structured professional support. As a result, in practice, there is often a tendency to use standardized lesson plans or reuse existing ones without sufficient adaptation to the classroom context and the specific needs of students.

Particularly in the field of Languages and Communication, lesson planning presents additional challenges, as this area directly influences the development of students' linguistic and communicative competence. Teachers are required to adopt a structured pedagogical and methodological approach, supported by well-designed lesson plans tailored to students' levels and needs.

Despite the importance of planning in the implementation of curriculum reform, there is a noticeable lack of empirical studies that directly analyze the actual content of lesson plans and their alignment with curriculum requirements, especially in the subject of Albanian language in lower secondary education in Kosovo.

In this context, the present study examines lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary schools in Kosovo, aiming to assess their alignment with curriculum requirements and to identify the challenges encountered during the preparation and implementation of lesson plans. Through a mixed-methods approach, including the analysis of lesson plans and interviews with teachers, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of existing planning practices.

The significance of this study lies in linking curriculum reform with actual classroom practice, offering empirical evidence that can serve as a basis for developing supportive policies and professional development programs. Based on the study findings, recommendations will be proposed to strengthen teachers' capacities and improve lesson planning practices in order to enhance the quality of learning.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Lesson planning

Lesson planning represents one of the key mechanisms for ensuring quality in teaching, particularly in the subject of Albanian language. It is closely linked to annual and periodic planning, as well as to the structuring of fundamental elements of the educational process, such as: the curriculum, the selection of methodology, the organization of learning activities, assessment of learning, and professional reflection. Planning is widely considered a central component of effective teaching, as it provides a structured framework that supports the achievement of learning objectives and facilitates classroom management (Richards & Bohlke, 2011, p. 44).

Lesson planning in this subject is directly related to the development of students' linguistic and communicative competencies, as well as to the improvement of their learning outcomes. According to Musai (2014), at the beginning of each instructional cycle, the teacher should analyze the nature of learning and the characteristics of the class, designing the teaching process in accordance with this diagnostic assessment. In the context of the Albanian language, this includes students' reading, writing, and language comprehension skills. This indicates that planning is an analytical and decision-making process, which must be adapted to the concrete needs of students. There is a strong

positive relationship between lesson planning and teaching effectiveness, implying that a well-designed lesson plan is essential for achieving learning objectives (Aljohani & Ahmad, 2025).

In this framework, Albanian language teachers are considered key actors in the interpretation and implementation of the curriculum. However, as highlighted by Shyti and Sula (2020), their autonomy is often limited by institutional standardization and administrative requirements, which may affect the flexibility and adaptability of lesson planning. International literature distinguishes between the “plan” as a final document and “planning” as a dynamic, reflective, and continuous process (Peps, 2016). This distinction is particularly important in language teaching practices, where continuous adaptation to the development of students’ linguistic abilities is required. In the same line, Baylor, Kitsantas, and Chung (2001) argue that the quality of planning is linked to teachers’ professional development and their ability to integrate technology in a sustainable way, such as in text analysis or the development of creative writing.

Other studies indicate that detailed and structured planning increases the coherence and effectiveness of the teaching process. Dunn (2011) states that the level of detail in a lesson plan directly influences the organization of the lesson, while Rodríguez-Gallego (2007) emphasizes that planning helps avoid uncontrolled improvisation and strengthens teacher professionalism. Ornstein and Lasley (2014) describe planning as a systematic process, supported by structured analysis and clear pedagogical principles. According to Devetaku (2014), activities planned by teachers for observed lessons are generally aimed at achieving the defined objectives. However, there are cases where activities are well aligned with learning outcomes but are not fully implemented due to poor time management by teachers.

From a contemporary perspective, Levy and Thompson (2015) emphasize that planning reflects teachers’ pedagogical beliefs about the nature of learning and student development. In the case of the Albanian language, this is reflected in how teachers conceptualize the development of reading, writing, and verbal communication competencies.

In the context of Kosovo, curriculum implementation documents and training modules emphasize that effective lesson planning requires a thorough understanding of guiding documents, the school context, and the individual needs of students (Planet,

Sofreco & WUS Austria, 2019). Furthermore, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (2020) highlights the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in planning, including in the subject of Albanian language, with the aim of connecting linguistic content with other cross-curricular areas.

Overall, lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education represent a complex process that integrates the technical, pedagogical, and reflective dimensions of the teaching profession. However, there remains a need for empirical analysis of actual planning practices in order to assess their alignment with curriculum requirements and with the theoretical principles articulated in the literature.

2.2 Levels of lesson planning

Lesson planning includes planning at several levels: curriculum level planning, annual planning, planning for instructional periods, weekly planning, and daily planning (the lesson plan). These levels form a hierarchical and functional structure aimed at operationalizing the curriculum in everyday classroom practice. Therefore, lesson planning is closely linked to curriculum documents for the respective subject area and grade level.

According to curriculum area guidelines for pre-university education in Kosovo, each level of planning is guided by the principles of a competency-based curriculum and is characterized by methodological features adapted to the respective level of implementation (MEST & KPI, 2016). In this sense, planning is not merely a temporal distribution of content, but a structured process that aims at the progressive development of students' competencies.

The annual plan represents the fundamental level of organizing teaching content. It defines the learning outcomes to be achieved throughout the school year, in alignment with the curriculum level, and specifies them for the respective grade. This plan includes the selection of concepts, themes, and content that serve as the basis for achieving the intended outcomes (MEST & KPI, 2016). In this way, the annual plan ensures both horizontal and vertical coherence in the teaching process.

Planning for instructional periods, usually prepared for one or two months, represents a more detailed level of organization. It breaks down the annual plan into themes and teaching units, specifying learning outcomes for each theme, methodological approaches, forms of assessment, and learning resources to be used for competency development (Planet *et al.*, 2019). This level serves as a bridge between strategic planning and practical classroom implementation.

The weekly plan has a coordinating and integrative function. It aims to ensure conceptual continuity between the learning units of the week and to enable interdisciplinary connections among contents. In this respect, weekly planning helps avoid fragmentation of knowledge and supports the development of a deeper understanding of concepts and phenomena (MEST & KPI, 2016).

Meanwhile, daily planning, or the lesson plan, represents the most operational level of planning. It includes the formulation of learning outcomes for the specific lesson, the selection of learning activities, teaching strategies, tools and resources, forms of assessment, and teacher reflection on the implementation of the lesson. Although schools have autonomy in determining the technical format of this plan, it is required to be grounded in the principles and requirements of curriculum documents (Planet *et al.*, 2019).

In pedagogical and didactic literature, lesson planning is addressed from various theoretical and practical perspectives, being considered the point where curriculum policy, teacher professionalism, and classroom reality intersect. For this reason, the following section will examine different theoretical and practical approaches in order to further illuminate the role and challenges of planning in the teaching process.

2.3 Lesson planning practices of teachers

Lesson planning represents the most operational level of planning and, at the same time, the point at which the curriculum is translated into actual classroom practice. In the context of teaching the Albanian language in lower secondary education in Kosovo, this process is of particular importance, as it directly influences the development of students' linguistic and communicative competencies. Effective planning by teachers ensures pedagogical coherence and a logical organization of content, aimed at achieving the

intended learning outcomes. According to Professor Musai, although there is no single model or universal “recipe” for lesson planning, teachers have the professional responsibility to design a structured and meaningful learning experience oriented toward achieving defined outcomes (Musai, 2014).

Planning is an analytical and reflective process, not merely an administrative requirement. In their practice, teachers are guided by three fundamental questions: what will be taught, how it will be taught, and how learning will be assessed. However, studies indicate that teachers often face difficulties in formulating clear learning outcomes and in selecting activities that correspond to students’ levels. According to Zingir Gülten (2013), these challenges are partly related to insufficient practical preparation of teachers in lesson planning during their university education.

From a didactic perspective, Richards emphasizes that effective lesson planning practices require the harmonious integration of three fundamental components: (i) the formulation of learning outcomes, (ii) the organization of learning activities in alignment with these outcomes, and (iii) formative assessment and continuous monitoring of students’ progress (Richards, 2017). In the teaching of the Albanian language, this implies that text analysis, discussions, creative writing, and language exercises should be directly linked to the intended outcomes and supported by appropriate assessment. The lack of alignment among these elements often leads to discrepancies between the intended objectives outlined in planning and the actual classroom practice. Lesson planning should support teachers in organizing content and activities coherently, thereby facilitating the achievement of learning objectives (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2018).

Planning practices are often characterized by a lack of coherence between different levels of planning (annual, periodic, and daily), as well as weak alignment between learning activities and intended learning outcomes or targeted competencies (Mehmeti & Buleshkaj, 2017). In many cases, learning outcomes and success criteria are formulated in a general or formal manner, while the planned activities do not clearly reflect the achievement of these outcomes. Additionally, the connection with subject-level learning outcomes (SLOs) often remains merely declarative.

According to Mehmeti *et al.* (2019), another significant challenge in planning practices is the lack of vertical coherence among annual, periodic, and daily plans. This may lead to fragmentation of content and a lack of clarity in the progressive development

of students' competencies. This situation aligns with findings from international literature, as Levy and Thompson (2015) highlight that such challenges are more pronounced in education systems where curricula are relatively new and the implementation process is still in the consolidation phase.

Although official guidelines and normative frameworks for planning exist in Kosovo, there is still a lack of in-depth empirical studies that specifically analyze the actual practices of Albanian language teachers. This gap highlights the need for research that focuses not only on planning documents, but also on teachers' real experiences and the institutional context in which these plans are designed and implemented. Lesson planning is considered a central component of teaching practice, as it directly affects the organization of content, classroom management, and the achievement of learning objectives (Farrell & Jacobs, 2016).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study is based on a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively analyze lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education in Kosovo.

The qualitative component includes content analysis of lesson plans, aiming to evaluate their structure and alignment with curriculum requirements. The quantitative component focuses on teachers' perceptions of planning practices, the challenges they encounter during lesson planning, and the factors influencing the quality of their plans.

The integration of these two approaches enables a more balanced understanding of actual lesson planning practices and the alignment between curriculum requirements and their implementation in practice within the context of lower secondary education in Kosovo.

3.2 Research purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education in Kosovo. The study aims to examine the content and structure of lesson plans and to identify the challenges teachers face during the planning process.

In particular, the focus is on assessing the alignment of lesson plans with curriculum requirements and the coherence between learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment methods.

3.3 Research questions

The main research question guiding this study is:

- What do the lesson plans of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary schools in Kosovo reveal regarding the fulfillment of curriculum requirements, the organization of teaching activities, and the challenges encountered during this process?

To operationalize the main question, the study is guided by the following sub-questions:

- What challenges do Albanian language teachers face during lesson planning?
- What are teachers' attitudes toward lesson planning models?
- To what extent do the learning outcomes included in lesson plans support the development of students' competencies?
- How do teachers define learning outcomes and success criteria during lesson planning?

3.3.1 Research hypotheses

The research hypotheses are formulated in alignment with the research questions:

- H1: There is a mismatch between learning outcomes and the planned teaching activities in Albanian language lesson plans.

- H2: Teachers face challenges in implementing the competency-based curriculum during lesson planning (e.g., formulating learning outcomes, selecting methods, assessment practices).
- H3: The use of standardized lesson planning models increases the alignment between learning outcomes, teaching activities, and assessment.

3.4 Population and sample

The study population consists of all Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education in the Pristina Region.

The sample was purposively selected and includes 15 lower secondary schools and 30 Albanian language teachers working with grades 6–9. The selection of teachers teaching these grades was made to gather information about their lesson planning practices and the methodologies used across different class levels.

3.5 Research instruments

Data collection was carried out through:

- Analysis of lesson plans prepared by participating teachers. This analysis focused on the structure of the plan, the formulation of learning outcomes, the alignment between activities and outcomes, and the forms of assessment used during the lesson.
- Structured questionnaire for teachers, which included closed-ended questions organized on a Likert scale to measure teachers' perceptions and practices, as well as open-ended questions to collect qualitative data on their experiences and challenges in lesson planning.

3.6 Data collection procedure

The data collection process was conducted in two phases:

- First phase: Desk research, which included the analysis of curriculum documents, methodological guidelines for curriculum implementation, and reports from

similar studies. This phase served to build the theoretical framework and to design the research instruments in alignment with the study objectives.

- Second phase: Field data collection. Initially, approval was obtained from the leaders of the participating educational institutions, after which teachers completed the questionnaire. In parallel, lesson plans prepared by Albanian language teachers were collected and analyzed.

The data collection process was conducted in accordance with ethical research principles, including informed consent and the protection of participants' anonymity.

3.7 Data analysis procedure

Quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were processed using the SPSS program. The analysis included descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies, percentages, arithmetic means, and standard deviations, in order to identify trends and teachers' attitudes regarding lesson planning.

Qualitative data obtained from teachers were analyzed through thematic analysis. The process included initial coding of responses, grouping codes into categories, and identifying key themes related to teachers' challenges, practices, and perceptions.

The analysis of lesson plans was conducted based on an evaluation framework developed according to criteria aligned with curriculum requirements. This included examining the formulation of learning outcomes, the coherence between activities and outcomes, and the clarity of assessment methods.

4 RESEARCH RESULTS

The research results include empirically collected and systematically analyzed data obtained through the teacher questionnaire, as well as the detailed analysis of lesson plans.

4.1 Research results from the teacher questionnaire

Teachers were asked about the lesson planning model and various components of lesson planning, including learning outcomes, success criteria, cross-curricular issues, assessment, assignments, as well as self-evaluation and reflection on the lesson. Additionally, aspects related to teaching resources, collaboration, training attended for curriculum implementation, and the challenges they face during lesson planning were also addressed.

4.1.1 Teachers' perceptions of the lesson planning model

Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education use a lesson planning model structured into three parts:

1. general aspects of the plan (field, subject, grade, topic, topic-related learning outcomes, and key competencies),
2. specific aspects of the lesson (teaching unit, learning outcomes, success criteria, resources and materials, cross-curricular links), and
3. methodology and activities with students, including the introduction, main activities, assessment, assignments, and post-lesson reflection.

Most teachers agree that the planning template helps them organize the lesson. However, more than half of the respondents believe that the current model contains unnecessary elements and formalities, suggesting the need for modification. A number of teachers prefer a standardized model developed by education experts, while a smaller group suggests more flexible options or personalized planning, which may better support students in developing communication and expression competencies.

Regarding the workload of the lesson planning template, 52% of teachers consider it overloaded, 32% somewhat agree, 8.6% partially agree, and 7% disagree ($M = 3.50$; $SD = 1.13$). Concerning the time required to complete it, about 60% report that it is time-consuming, 29% somewhat agree, 8.5% partially agree, and only 3.4% disagree ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 1.10$).

These findings indicate that although completing the planning template requires considerable time, the lesson plan remains a key element in delivering high-quality instruction aligned with curriculum requirements.

4.1.2 Learning outcomes, success criteria, and assessment in lesson plans

Regarding learning outcomes, over 70% of teachers reported that topic-related outcomes (from the bi-monthly plan), as well as their contribution to key competency outcomes at the curriculum level, make lesson planning more demanding. This indicates that, in lesson planning practices for the Albanian language subject, learning outcomes serve as a key guiding element, but at the same time present challenges for teachers. Most teachers consider learning outcomes difficult to implement, while 60% state that they are challenging to achieve even when planned according to guidelines, reflecting the complexity of translating them into concrete learning activities.

Concerning success criteria, 45% of teachers agree that it is difficult to define them, 20.7% somewhat agree, 10% partially agree, and 24% disagree ($M = 2.95$; $SD = 1.343$). This suggests that, within the lesson planning process, defining success criteria remains a challenging component. However, in open-ended responses, most teachers state that they determine success criteria during planning based on learning outcomes, students' levels, expectations, and prior knowledge. A smaller number of teachers define them together with students, indicating different approaches to planning practices.

The integration of topics with other subjects and cross-curricular issues is also perceived as challenging: 34.5% of teachers agree that it is difficult, 40% somewhat agree, and 19% disagree ($M = 2.59$; $SD = 1.161$). In the context of Albanian language lesson planning, this suggests that cross-curricular integration is not always easily achieved, mainly due to a lack of coordination among professional groups and teachers, as well as misalignment between subject plans. Some teachers use projects or other approaches to connect topics with real-life situations and attempt to make planning more functional and integrated.

The implementation of lesson plans requires supporting materials such as images, videos, or other resources. Only 46% of teachers agree that schools provide the necessary materials, 40% somewhat agree, 10% partially agree, and 3.4% disagree ($M = 3.55$; SD

= 1.095). This indicates that the availability of material resources directly affects the implementation of lesson planning, in some cases limiting the realization of planned activities in the Albanian language subject.

Regarding student assessment, 26% of teachers report difficulties, 29% somewhat agree, 14% partially agree, and 31% report no difficulties ($M = 2.59$; $SD = 1.325$). These findings show that assessment, as part of lesson planning, presents challenges for a considerable proportion of teachers, particularly in aligning it with learning outcomes and success criteria.

According to the teachers involved in the study, assignments and independent work are mainly integrated within the subject: over 80% of teachers report incorporating assignments, while 14% somewhat agree ($M = 4.24$; $SD = 0.757$). This indicates that, in lesson planning practices for the Albanian language subject, teachers place significant importance on including independent activities as part of the lesson structure.

Regarding reflection and self-evaluation of the lesson, 65% of teachers report that they carry it out successfully, 10% partially, and only 3.4% do not manage to implement it ($M = 3.76$; $SD = 1.081$). This demonstrates that reflection is a well-established practice in the planning process and in the continuous improvement of teaching.

The findings suggest that, within lesson planning practices for the Albanian language subject in lower secondary education in Kosovo, despite challenges in formulating learning outcomes, defining success criteria, and achieving cross-curricular integration, teachers consistently implement assignments and reflection. Meanwhile, the availability of material resources remains an important need for achieving the intended outcomes according to the lesson plan.

4.1.3 Collaboration, monitoring, and teacher training for curriculum implementation

The implementation of the competency-based curriculum in the Albanian language subject in lower secondary education in Kosovo is closely linked to the quality of lesson planning practices, which require continuous collaboration among teachers. Cross-curricular integration, one of the key requirements of this curriculum, is achieved through class councils and professional subject groups, directly influencing how lesson plans are structured in this subject. The data show that over 70% of teachers collaborate

regularly during planning, reflecting a positive tendency toward developing more integrated and functional lesson plans in Albanian language. However, the fact that only about half consider professional groups to be functional indicates that this collaboration is not yet fully utilized to improve the quality of lesson planning.

Regarding monitoring, practices of supervision and professional support have a direct impact on improving lesson planning in Albanian language. Concerning the review of daily lesson plans, 65% of teachers agree that plans are continuously monitored by the school principal and the quality coordinator, 17% somewhat agree, and only 8.6% disagree ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 1.264$). This suggests that improving planning practices is not only related to formal document control but also to practical support during lesson implementation in the classroom, especially in a subject such as Albanian language, where interaction and active methodologies are essential.

In terms of training, all teachers involved in the study reported that they had completed training for curriculum implementation, which mainly focused on developing competencies for planning and integrated teaching approaches. However, its impact on improving lesson planning practices in Albanian language remains limited. Only 34.5% agree that the training has helped them plan lessons according to standards, 20% somewhat agree, and 10% partially agree, while the rest do not agree ($M = 3.93$; $SD = 0.989$). About half of the teachers express the need for more specialized training in lesson planning aligned with curriculum requirements. This indicates that existing training programs do not sufficiently address the needs of teachers in this subject, particularly in designing lesson plans that coherently integrate learning outcomes, activities, and assessment.

Teachers report that lesson planning practices in the Albanian language subject are supported by a relatively good level of collaboration; however, this potential is not fully utilized due to the limited functionality of professional groups. According to them, monitoring exists but should be more supportive and practice-oriented in order to directly influence the quality of planning. Meanwhile, current training programs lack sufficient practical impact, highlighting the need for more specialized and context-oriented approaches focused on the specific requirements of lesson planning in Albanian language. Teachers suggest organizing practical, subject-focused training at the school level, which

would directly support them in improving lesson planning and its effective implementation in the classroom.

The table presents descriptive statistics and teachers' attitudes toward lesson planning, including the mean and standard deviation.

Table 1

Statistics of selected statements

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Lesson planning (completion of the daily lesson plan) requires a lot of time	3.74	1.101
I still face difficulties in planning and implementing the lesson	2.12	1.044
The current lesson planning model is overloaded	3.50	1.128
Defining success criteria during lesson planning is challenging	2.95	1.343
Including field outcomes and topic-based learning outcomes makes the daily plan more complex	3.17	1.244
Linking lesson content with other subjects and real-life situations is challenging	2.95	1.161
The assignments I give to students include interdisciplinary integration	4.24	0.757
I am able to conduct self-evaluation of lesson quality in relation to plan implementation	3.76	1.081
I collaborate with other teachers during lesson planning	3.95	0.826
Professional groups in the school are functional and support me in planning	3.72	0.894
My lesson plans are monitored by the principal or quality coordinator	3.74	1.264
The principal and quality coordinator provide support during lesson planning	3.86	1.206
Curriculum training has helped me in lesson planning	3.93	0.989
I need more training to improve lesson planning	3.31	1.143

The data presented in the table provide an overview of Albanian language teachers' perceptions of the lesson planning process. The analysis of the mean values indicates that teachers generally hold a positive attitude toward planning and professional collaboration, although some elements of this process are considered challenging.

One of the main findings is that lesson planning requires a considerable amount of time, as reflected in the relatively high mean ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 1.101$). Additionally, a significant number of teachers perceive the current planning model as overloaded ($M = 3.50$; $SD = 1.128$), and note that the inclusion of field outcomes and topic-based learning outcomes makes the daily plan more complex ($M = 3.17$; $SD = 1.244$). These results suggest that curriculum requirements contribute to increasing the complexity of planning.

However, the relatively low mean for the statement that teachers still face difficulties in planning and implementing lessons ($M = 2.12$; $SD = 1.044$) indicates that most teachers feel relatively confident in their professional abilities to carry out this process. At the same time, the mean of 3.31 ($SD = 1.143$) shows that a number of teachers express the need for additional training, highlighting the importance of continuous professional development.

Regarding cross-curricular integration, the highest mean was recorded for the statement that assignments given to students include interdisciplinary integration ($M = 4.24$; $SD = 0.757$), indicating that teachers largely apply this approach in their teaching practice. A relatively good level was also observed in terms of self-evaluation of lesson quality ($M = 3.76$; $SD = 1.081$).

The results also indicate a high level of professional collaboration within schools. Teachers collaborate with colleagues during lesson planning ($M = 3.95$; $SD = 0.826$), and professional groups are considered functional and supportive of this process ($M = 3.72$; $SD = 0.894$). This suggests that collegial collaboration plays an important role in improving planning practices.

Teachers also report that their lesson plans are monitored by school management ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 1.264$), while the support provided by the principal and the quality coordinator is positively evaluated ($M = 3.86$; $SD = 1.206$). Furthermore, curriculum training is perceived as helpful in lesson planning ($M = 3.93$; $SD = 0.989$).

4.2 Findings from the analysis of lesson plans

To better understand teachers' practices in lesson planning, the study also analyzed lesson planning models used by Albanian language teachers in lower secondary schools in Kosovo. The analysis focused on alignment with curriculum requirements, including three main dimensions: (i) general aspects of the lesson plan, (ii) specific aspects, and (iii) methodology and student-centered activities during the lesson.

Most teachers used the official lesson planning model, a template based on curriculum requirements. However, only a few teachers completed all general and specific components in accordance with the guidelines of the template, including

methodology, student activities, assessment, assignments and independent work, as well as reflection on the lesson.

From a formal perspective, most lesson plans were submitted with dates and signed by the teachers. However, some plans lacked a planning date or were taken from previous months or years.

4.2.1 General aspects of the lesson plan

The analysis of lesson plans revealed several shortcomings in lesson planning, confirming teachers' perceptions. Some plans were carefully prepared and reflected teachers' efforts toward clear structuring, while others included only basic curriculum concepts and did not ensure consistent alignment between learning outcomes for key competencies at the curriculum level, subject-area outcomes, and the content of the teaching unit.

Most teachers included lesson topics and learning outcomes related to themes, competencies, and curriculum areas; however, these were often presented without a clear and functional connection between them. This indicates that current lesson planning practices in the Albanian language subject in Kosovo are characterized more by a formal rather than a functional approach, as elements are included in the plan more as an administrative requirement than as an integral part of the teaching process.

At the same time, the fact that these plans were approved by responsible personnel within schools without suggestions or feedback for improvement suggests a lack of effective monitoring mechanisms and professional support, which in turn affects the overall quality of lesson planning.

4.2.2 Specific aspects of the lesson plan

The analysis of lesson plans, within the framework of this study on lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education in Kosovo, identified several shortcomings in the specific aspects of planning, which directly affect the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

Some lesson plans do not include learning outcomes that are measurable, clear, and structured according to the action–purpose–object–condition–criterion formula. In many cases, lesson outcomes are not aligned with topic-level outcomes, fall outside the focus of the lesson, or are overly general, such as: “gives opinions,” “talks about information,” or “develops a sense of culture.” In some instances, teachers have defined too many learning outcomes for a single teaching unit, making them difficult to achieve and assess effectively. This indicates a lack of clarity in operationalizing outcomes and aligning them with the requirements of a competency-based curriculum.

Regarding success criteria, about half of the teachers were unable to define them correctly or used them interchangeably with learning outcomes. In some lesson plans, success criteria are entirely absent, while in others they are presented in a generalized form, identical to learning outcomes, without a clear connection to the teaching unit. Examples of unclear success criteria reflect conceptual confusion about their function and also affect formative assessment, making it less structured and less focused on students’ progress.

In the analyzed lesson plans, resources, teaching aids, and materials are often not specified adequately or are presented in general and standardized forms such as: textbook, pen, notebook, board, or laptop. Furthermore, the description of learning activities is often not directly aligned with the achievement of learning outcomes and the development of competencies, reflecting a lack of coherence among the main components of planning.

Cross-curricular integration, which aims to connect students’ knowledge, skills, and values, is only partially implemented. In many lesson plans, there is a lack of clarity regarding how content and activities are linked to other subjects, cross-curricular issues, or real-life situations. Although teachers often list certain subject areas or disciplines, the concrete explanation of these connections is missing.

The findings indicate that lesson planning practices of Albanian language teachers in lower secondary education in Kosovo face significant challenges in operationalizing specific components of the lesson plan. Shortcomings in formulating learning outcomes, defining success criteria, selecting resources, and implementing cross-curricular integration highlight the need to strengthen teachers’ professional competencies in didactic planning, in order to make it a functional tool for improving the quality of teaching and learning.

4.2.3 Description of methodology and student activities during the lesson

The analysis of lesson plans shows that the description of methodology and student activities is often not aligned with contemporary planning requirements and the principles of a competency-based curriculum. One of the most significant shortcomings relates to the assessment component, as about half of the teachers did not complete this section in their lesson plans.

Even in cases where assessment was included, there is a lack of clear alignment between assessment methods and the intended learning outcomes of the lesson. Teachers often mention forms of assessment (such as checklists, projects, portfolios) without specifying how these contribute to achieving specific outcomes. In some cases, descriptions are general and unstructured, reflecting a lack of methodological clarity.

Examples from the lesson plans indicate a more intuitive rather than systematically planned approach to assessment, as multiple elements are included without clear organization, such as oral responses, written work, participation in discussions, homework, or classroom attention. This suggests that assessment remains one of the main challenges in lesson planning practices.

Similarly, the section on assignments and independent work presents considerable shortcomings. In many lesson plans, this part is not completed, while in cases where it is included, assignments are often general, reproductive in nature, and not always aligned with the teaching unit or cross-curricular integration. This indicates a lack of deliberate planning of activities that promote active and independent learning among students.

Regarding reflection on the lesson, most teachers did not complete this section during planning or addressed it superficially. In some cases, general statements such as “everything was fine” or unsubstantiated evaluations (e.g., satisfied, moderately satisfied) were used, without providing concrete analysis of the success or shortcomings of the lesson.

Overall, the description of methodology and the organization of classroom activities are not always structured or aligned with the achievement of learning outcomes, highlighting the need for greater professional support for teachers in improving lesson planning practices.

4.3 Discussion of results

The research findings, based on the reviewed literature, teachers' perceptions, and the analysis of lesson plans prepared by teachers, provide an in-depth overview of lesson planning practices in the Albanian language subject in lower secondary education in Kosovo. The comparison of data sources highlights not only consistencies but also important discrepancies between what teachers report and what is actually implemented in practice.

Teachers perceive the planning model as a useful tool for organizing lessons and ensuring the quality of teaching. However, at the same time, they consider the current template to be overloaded and overly formal. This is also confirmed by the analysis of lesson plans, which shows that although most teachers use the official planning model, not all of them are able to complete its components fully and functionally. In many cases, elements of the plan are included in a formal manner, without clear and functional connections between them, indicating that planning is often viewed as an administrative requirement rather than a genuine didactic tool.

Regarding learning outcomes, teachers' perceptions of the difficulties in formulating and implementing them are strongly aligned with the findings from the analysis of lesson plans. Teachers consider learning outcomes complex and challenging to apply in the classroom, and in their plans, these are often presented in a generalized, non-measurable form and are not aligned with topic-level outcomes. In some cases, the large number of learning outcomes planned for a single lesson makes it difficult to achieve and assess them effectively. This mismatch reflects real difficulties teachers face in translating curriculum requirements into concrete planning practices.

A similar situation is observed in the definition of success criteria. Although some teachers report that they define them during lesson planning, the analysis of lesson plans shows that success criteria are often missing, unclear, or identical to learning outcomes. This indicates conceptual confusion regarding their function and directly affects the quality of formative assessment, which in many cases remains weak or unstructured.

Regarding cross-curricular integration, teachers' perceptions and practices appear consistent. Teachers consider this process challenging, and the analysis of lesson plans confirms that connections between subjects often remain at a declarative level, without

concrete descriptions of how integration is achieved during lesson planning. This suggests that, although cross-curricular integration is present in official documents, it is not sufficiently developed as a functional practice in lesson planning.

With respect to teaching resources, teachers' perceptions of limited material conditions are also reflected in the lesson plans, where resources and materials are often described in general rather than specific terms. This limits teachers' ability to implement diverse activities, affecting the quality of planned instruction, particularly in the Albanian language subject, where interaction and the use of concrete materials are essential.

One of the most significant discrepancies between teachers' perceptions and actual practice relates to reflection and self-evaluation. While most teachers report that they successfully engage in this process, the analysis of lesson plans shows that reflection is often missing or treated superficially. This indicates that reflection is frequently practiced informally but is not documented or systematically used to improve teaching practices and achieve intended outcomes.

The research findings also show that assessment remains one of the main challenges in lesson planning. Teachers report difficulties in aligning assessment with learning outcomes and success criteria, while the analysis of lesson plans reveals that this component is often missing or described in general and unstructured ways. This situation highlights the need to strengthen teachers' competencies in planning assessment as an integral part of the teaching process.

Regarding collaboration and monitoring, the results indicate a good level of cooperation among teachers and institutional oversight of lesson plans. However, the presence of numerous shortcomings in the analyzed plans suggests that monitoring is largely formal and not accompanied by concrete professional support for improvement. Likewise, the impact of training for curriculum implementation appears limited, as it does not effectively address the practical challenges teachers face in lesson planning in the Albanian language subject.

The discussion of the results indicates that lesson planning practices in the Albanian language subject are characterized by a clear gap between curriculum requirements and their implementation in practice. While teachers understand the importance of planning and demonstrate commitment to this process, difficulties in operationalizing key components, a predominantly formal approach to planning, lack of

professional support, and limitations in material resources all affect the quality and functionality of lesson plans.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The findings of the study indicate that lesson planning practices in the Albanian language subject in lower secondary schools in Kosovo are often oriented more toward formal requirements than toward professional development and active learning. Teachers primarily use the official curriculum template, which is perceived as overloaded and time-consuming, while not all lesson plans fully meet the requirements of general and specific aspects, including methodology, student activities, assessment, and post-lesson reflection.

Learning outcomes and the definition of success criteria emerge as the main challenges for teachers, while cross-curricular integration and the use of teaching resources are only partially implemented. Assessment often remains unclear and weakly aligned with specific outcomes, whereas assignments and independent activities are not always planned in a stimulating way and do not sufficiently promote critical thinking and creativity among students.

Collaboration among teachers exists, but it is often formal, and the impact of completed training remains insufficient. Professional support and monitoring of curriculum implementation are not always well-coordinated, which makes lesson planning less effective and not consistently aligned with curriculum requirements.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on teachers' perceptions and the analysis of lesson plans, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Improving the planning model: Modify the current template or develop a more flexible model that allows creativity and adaptation to students' needs. Standardize the structure to ensure alignment with subject learning outcomes and key competencies.

- Focusing on learning outcomes: Ensure that learning outcomes are clear and measurable, and that planned activities directly contribute to achieving these outcomes.
- Strengthening methodology and assessment: Use clear and structured assessment methods aligned with specific outcomes. Encourage the use of creative and independent activities that promote active learning.
- Enhancing cross-curricular integration and use of resources: Plan meaningful connections with other subjects and real-life contexts. Ensure the availability of necessary materials and teaching tools to support implementation.
- Promoting collaboration and professional support: Establish networks for sharing experiences among teachers. Improve monitoring and professional guidance to support teachers during planning and lesson implementation. Organize continuous training focused on curriculum-based planning.

The implementation of these recommendations would help transform lesson planning from a formal process into a functional and developmental tool, thereby improving the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes.

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